

XXIX, *The Burning and Burial of the Dead.* By WILLIAM MICHAEL WYLIE,
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“Constituere pyras; huc corpora quisque suorum
More tulere patrum.”

Virg. *Æn.* xi. 185.

ARCHÆOLOGY, at the present day, is no longer the ill-appreciated amusement of the few. Its study is widely spread, while its importance is generally admitted, even by those whose inclination does not lead them to pursue it as a study.

No branch of archæology appears to excite more general interest than sepulchral research in our own land, or in those foreign lands whose early inhabitants were, so to speak, kinsmen of our forefathers. This widely-diffused interest of our day happily differs altogether from the indiscriminate curiosity of a preceding age. And if science ventures to pass the sacred threshold of the tomb, it is solely because the early domestic history of our race is only to be found recorded in the tablets of the dead.

Cremation, whether from its ancient oriental origin, its general heathen development, or its mystic associations, is a rite which most thinking men agree in regarding with attention. The fine old essay “Hydriotaphia,” in which Browne gave utterance to his reflections on this theme, still enriches our early literature; while, but lately, the same subject has claimed the attention of Grimm and Kemble. It is indeed not a little remarkable that cremation, with its attendant matter, has called forth such beautiful compositions, at different eras, from men of so profound a learning and research. The essay on the “Verbrennen der Leichen,” delivered by Dr. Grimm before the Berlin Academy, in 1850, independently of the beauty of the composition, is a noble example of what archæology may become when accompanied by deep research and historical literature.

I trust then it may not be thought presumptuous if, following such predecessors at a distance, I now request permission to venture a few remarks on the

cremation system generally prevalent among the Indo-European nations, with a special inquiry into the evidence of its existence among our own Anglo-Saxon race. The task is confessedly an arduous one, which I could have wished intrusted to abler hands than mine.

Cremation—at least Teutonic cremation—is generally wanting in the interest and information which attends the succeeding rite of burial. Here, the arms of the dead—the ornaments of dress—the objects of domestic life—all come forth from the ‘conservative earth after ages have rolled by. They tell us of the manners and customs of early times, and elucidate many an obscure page of rude, archaic history. Such illustrations give zest to the pages of Sidonius, Gregory of Tours, and-Fredegair. They help us to realize Meroveus and Clovis, and follow with interest the doings of the fierce race which culminated in Charlemagne. So too with our own first literature. Fate indeed has denied us the early annalists she granted to the Franks, yet we can produce the charming myth of Beowulf, dear to every lover of early romance: no one however will deny that some acquaintance with Teutonic monumental antiquities is requisite to a due appreciation and full enjoyment of that singularly beautiful poem. But with cremation all is lost. The pomp and circumstance of time dissolve with the body of the dead amidst the fiery glow of the funeral pyre, and little remains to tell of the past. Some occasional coin, some little ornament, the last tribute perchance of woman’s affection, may possibly be found among the ashes collected from the flames into the sepulchral urn—but this is all. Hence, sometimes considerable difficulty ensues in a correct attribution of remains of this period, where our sole evidence possibly consists in a few fragments of a cinerary urn.

At what period cremation may have entirely ceased is an obscure question on which very differing opinions are entertained. The gradual progress of Christianity, imperceptibly influencing little by little even its bitterest opponents through the under-current of social life, doubtless brought about the movement. As with all other great national changes, a very long transition-period must have existed, and centuries perhaps intervened between the coming in of the new usage and the complete extinction of the old. Cremation and the antagonistic rite must have carried on a slow contention, and the plains of the dead have long received into a joint occupancy the remains both of those who had and those who had not “passed through the fire.”^a

^a Campus autem ipse dudum refertus tam bustualibus favillis, quam cadaveribus.—Sidon. Apoll. epist. xii l. 111.

"Burning of the dead and urn-burial," observes Sir Thomas Browne, "lasted longer, at least in this country, than is commonly supposed." His Brampton urns, possibly Romano-British, may bear any date subsequent to Posthumus and Tetricus, whose coins appeared in them. Coins of Constantine have been met with in Gallo-Roman cinerary urns at Metz, and elsewhere, in France, which gives a yet later date. The Abbé Cochet, and M. de Caumont, the experienced editor of the "*Bulletin Monumental*," declare no instance of cremation has occurred later than Constantine^a—that is, that no coins later than those of Constantine have occurred in Gallo-Roman cinerary urns.

Sidonius Apollinaris, in one of his epistles,^b speaks of the fall of a funeral pile, and the disgusting appearance of the half-burned corpse. This is certainly written in a similitude, but his language is vivid—like that of a person who had witnessed cremation—and if so, the rite must have existed in France even in the fifth century. There are other passages also in his works^c which would lead us to suspect the existence of cremation in his times, but, if such really were the case, it must be attributed to the Goths. Cremation among the Gallo-Romans must have been long extinct. Grimm^d indeed suggests that such allusions of Sidonius possibly go to prove the lingering heathen practices of the Goths, and that the Arianism they nominally professed may have even sanctioned cremation rites. It is so far certain that, in another epistle,^e Sidonius details the defeat of the Goths by Eccidius, and how they burned their dead in the houses fired in their retreat. But any army might so seek to disembarass themselves, in a disastrous flight, of the slain it was not possible to inter.

From what we know of the spread of Christianity during the fourth century among the Gallo-Romans and our own Romano-British population, we may rest satisfied that both nations were, at least professedly, Christian, and must consequently have forsaken the old rites of cremation. That heathenism still lingered on in a few retired spots, here and there, in both countries we also know, but

^a *La Normandie Souterraine*, pp. 34, 167.

^b *Sordidior atque deformior est cadavere rogali quod, facibus admotis, semi-combustum, moxque sidente strue torrium devolutum, reddere pyræ jam fastidiosus pollinctor exhorret.*—*Epist. xiii. lib. 3.*

^c "—infusaque raptim

Excussit tumulis solidatas vita favillas."

Carm. xvi. l. 67.

"*Infastiditum fers ipse ad busta cadaver.*"

Carm. xvi. l. 123.

^d *Verbrennen der Leichen*, p. 27. Berlin, 1850.

^e *Epist. iii. l. 111.*

Roman heathenism also had ceased long before to burn its dead. This is a fact ever to be borne in mind by the archæologist in investigating examples of Teutonic cremation. No doubt the scarcity and expense of fuel in cities, and a few very populous districts, gradually rendered the burning of the dead too onerous an expense in such localities, but this objection would not apply elsewhere. Other causes must be sought for the extinction of cremation. At the present day the poorer classes of Hindoos at Calcutta are debarred from burning their dead, *more patrum*, by the high price of wood: if wood were plentiful, the burning would go on as before. The Sepoys lately sent to China, on landing, burned the bodies of their comrades who had died on the voyage from India.

So far as our present amount of information extends in this branch of archæology, there would appear but very little to guide us in determining the belief of those whose remains we so frequently encounter in Teutonic graves. From the earliest date of inhumation, down to the historic period termed Carlovingian, we find the same character of interment. Such difference as may be perceptible in the accompanying reliques are most probably attributable to the varying state of art during so long a period. If any clue may be supposed to exist, perhaps the orientation of graves—of course considered in connection with other circumstances—may seem to be the most reasonable. We know the early teaching of the Church on this point.^a As we may then suppose her ministers would obey and enforce her teaching, there certainly appears a degree of presumptive evidence in favour of the Christian belief of those whose bodies may be found lying with feet pointing to the east. Yet the Alemannic graves of Oberflacht afford a fair instance of the little reliance that can be placed on mere orientation. These graves are in the true orthodox position of east and west, but contain all the accessories that can indicate the most inveterate heathenism—and for undoubted heathen graves they pass in Germany. If Christian ritual was ever read at such interments, it could only have been in the light of a spell, by one of those early hedge-priests who may have driven both trades—"per agrestia loca"—as we gather from the epistles of St. Boniface.^b

While however Christians prayed turning to the east, and maintained the same orientation in death, it must be remembered the practice of heathen worship was entirely different.

^a Durandi Rationale Div. Off. l. vii. c. 35, sec. 39. Debet autem quis sic sepelire, ut capita ad occidentem posito, pedes dirigat ad orientem in quo quasi ipsa positione orat; et innuit quod promptus est ut de occasu festinet ad ortum: de mundo ad seculum.

^b Boniface, epist. lxxi.

In the North was the holy place of Teutonic heathendom, and to the north, accordingly, the Teuton turned while engaged in sacrifice and prayer. In this fact Grimm seeks the explanation of a passage in the old poem of Reinhart Fuchs, where the fox is described praying like a Christian—that is, facing eastward; but the wolf, like a heathen, facing north—“wo der fuchs *christlich*, der wolf *heidnisch* gebet.”^a Christians hence came to consider the north as the region of ill-omen,^b and various superstitious usages of the early period attest the prevalence of the idea.^c If therefore our former proposition be accepted, it is equally reasonable to consider as heathen such remains as we find lying with feet to the North. An incident worthy of attention, as bearing on this subject of orientation, is mentioned by Brian Faussett in the “*Inventorium Sepulcrale* :” “Almost all the graves opened at Ash, Chartham Downs, Kingston, and Bishopsbourne pointed with their feet to the east. It is also to be observed, that all those few that have materially deviated from this direction were always, and without a single exception, found at the extreme verge or utmost limits of the burying-ground.”^d We may therefore possibly be correct in assuming the mass of interments, lying east and west, to have been Christian; and the few outsiders, in a north and south position, to have been heathen. Interments are occasionally found with still varying orientation; but this is rare, and altogether exceptional. Teutonic graves, both here and abroad, will be found to be made due east and west, or north and south, as a rule.

Some consideration of the funeral usages of India itself may, perhaps, be thought to fitly preface this brief inquiry into those of the nations of Europe.

The European languages, ancient or modern, reveal their Eastern origin. If this be conceded, it will probably be thought a fair inference that the all-pervading custom of cremation was also derived from the same source. Such an inference, indeed, rests on the evidence furnished by the history of India, from the earliest period to our own. Other modes of disposing of the frail human form have existed, and still do exist, in the East. We know that certain Indian races bury their dead; while others again expose them on the river's shore, to be carried away by the rising stream or devoured by beasts of prey. But as the funeral pile ever was and still remains to the Indian heathen, throughout all the vicissitudes of time, the one great national mode of resolving matter into its component elements, so we shall find its use generally maintained by the great

^a D. Mythologie, p. 30, ed. 1854.

^c Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer, p. 808.

^b Durandi Rationale Div. Off. l. iv. c. 24, sec. 21.

^d *Inventorium Sepulcrale*, p. 39.

Indo-European family of nations during the period of heathenism. Of the voluntary sacrifice of the Indian widow on her husband's funeral pile, and the contests among the women for this honour of self-immolation, Cicero, Propertius, Plutarch, Damascenus, Diodorus, and other ancient writers all make mention.

Ardent victrices et flammæ pectora præbent,
Imponuntque suis ora perusta viris.^a

The prevalence of urn-burial among the great Hellenic and Romanic branches is too well known to all present to require further mention here. Our present inquiry will be more particularly directed to the Teutonic branch. Nor need we dwell on the sepulchral usages of the Kelts. In Gaul, in Britain, and indeed wherever the remains of this widely-spread race may be found, urn-burial seems to have been the prevailing rite.^b Exceptional instances of inhumation have occurred with Keltic remains, as I conceive may have been the case with all the people who adhered to urn-burial.

The recent researches of Mr. Akerman, in a Keltic cemetery at Bright-hampton, in Oxfordshire,^c disclosed a great number of examples of cremation, unmixed with inhumation.

Of the vast ill-defined region called Scythia we learn but little from Herodotus. Earth-burial seems to have been the prevailing mode of interment; cremation is not mentioned. Herodotus, indeed, tells us at the same time that the country was wholly destitute of wood;^d so that the bones of animals were burnt for fuel, just as their dung alone supplies the modern traveller's fire on the plains of Tartary.^e So bare a country was, indeed, but little adapted for cremation rites. It must have been in some other of the wide regions of Scythia that the altars of sacrifice, composed of mounds of faggots—*φρυγανων*—were set up;^f as also the faggot-piles whereon the false prophets were burned.^g Where these practices were carried on we can hardly think cremation could have been entirely unknown, nor would it be in any way consistent with the funeral usages of the heathen Russians in the tenth century, to which we shall have occasion to refer later.

^a Propertius, iv. 12.

^b Cæsar, de Bell. Gall. vi. 19. Pomp. Mela, iii. 2, 3.

^c Archæologia, vol. XXXVII.

^d Herodotus, iv. 61.

^e Huc's Journey in Tartary, &c.

^f Herodotus, iv. 62.

^g Ib. iv. 68.

The Thracians, according to Herodotus,^a practised both modes of sepulture. Pomponius Mela^b speaks of cremation only, accompanied by full honours at the pile—"arma, opesque ad rogos deferunt." Both historians mention the immolation of the widow—probably on the funeral pyre. Herodotus does not appear to have been aware of the general practice of the widow-sacrifice in India. In far later times Procopius^c relates precisely the same customs among the Gothic tribe of the Heruli. We find not only that the Heruli practised cremation in the sixth century, but further, that it was the custom of this fierce people to slay all their sick and aged on the pile, and then burn them. Whether death in the usual course of nature would have incapacitated them for the honour of cremation does not appear; but a legendary allusion, in the life of St. Arnulphus, to similar usages among the Thuringians more than a century later, as we shall presently see, would go far to induce such a suspicion.

That cremation was the prevailing funeral rite of the early Germans we have the certain witness of Tacitus. His words cannot be too often repeated, for they are our text-book. "Funerum nulla ambitio. Id solum observatur, ut corpora clarorum virorum certis lignis crementur. Struem rogi nec vestibus, nec odoribus cumulant. Sua cuique arma; quorundam igni et equus adjicitur. Sepulcrum cespes erigit."^d

That cremation existed among the later races of Southern and Central Germany we find satisfactorily established by the numerous examinations of their sepulchral tumuli which have been made during the last few years.^e At the same time it is sufficiently evident that inhumation had become the more accustomed rite. By the time most of the German tribes had become established powers in this part of the country, and obtained a place in the pages of certain history, the influence of Christianity, and the example of Roman civilization, must have combined to bring the old custom of burning the dead into desuetude. Hence we find no allusion to it in the statutes of the most early-recorded jurisprudence of these southern German states, which, of itself alone, would indicate the complete extinction of cremation as a national rite. Yet the reminiscence of the past will often long endure in the proverbial idiom of a language, and the German saying—instanced by Grimm—of "*reiser zum scheiterhaufen tragen*," literally, "to bring sticks to the funeral pile," used in the sense of "rendering any slight aid, or contribution," certainly points to a period when such a phrase must have had a

^a Herodotus, v. 5, 8.^b ii. 2, 4.^c Bell. Goth. ii. 14.^d De Mor. Germ. 27.^e *Wilhelmi's Reports of the Sinsheim Society, passim.* W. Grimm, *Über Deutsche Runen.*

primary and positive meaning.^a Heathenism, and the purifying flame, must have found a home in the vast forests and mountain-valleys of Germany long after the inhabitants of the towns had adopted a Christian belief. A passage indeed in the life of St. Arnulphus shows this to have been the case among the Thuringians, even so late as the middle of the seventh century. St. Arnulph is said by his prayers to have restored health to a sick man, and saved him from a cruel death. His friends were on the point of killing and conveying him to the funeral pile—"ut languentis, capite amputato, cadaver *more gentilium* ignibus traderetur."^b

This legendary incident would induce a suspicion of the existence in Thuringia also of the Herulian custom of immolating the infirm and aged on the pyre. If we could think such bloody rites were very generally practised as a necessary qualification for cremation, we can well understand the anxiety of the Christian Church for its suppression on the mere score of humanity. Rogge indeed asserts^c that earth-burial was the mode of sepulture granted to such as died a natural death, while cremation was reserved solely for those slain in battle, or otherwise. This would be valuable information if based upon any certain evidence; but unfortunately this important element is altogether wanting.

Of Northern Germany, Mr. Kemble, speaking of mortuary urns, tells us, "Urn of precisely similar form, and with exactly the same peculiarities, have been discovered in Jutland, and parts of Friesland, on the borders of the Elbe, in Westphalia, in Thuringia, in parts of Saxony, in the Dutchies of Bremen and Verden, the County of Hoya, and other districts on the Weser; in short, in many parts of Germany east of the Rhine, west of the Upper Elbe and Saale, and north of the Maine. They have therefore been found in countries which were occupied by the forefathers of the Anglo-Saxons. The latest of these discoveries is that made in the course of last year at Stade-on-the-Elbe, in the kingdom of Hanover."^d

Of the attachment of the old Saxons to their national rite, we have direct historical evidence. St. Boniface, instancing their purity of morals, tells us that any Saxon female convicted of unchastity was forced to destroy herself, while

^a Another reminiscence exists in an old treatise on cremation—"im brand zen haidengrebern"—which bears the date of 1475, when the traditions of the old rites may not have been quite forgotten. It is cited in Mone's *Urgeschichte des Badischen Landes*.

^b Mabillon's *Acta Benedict.*

^c *Über das Gerichtswesen der Germanen*, p. 38.

^d *Burial and Cremation. Archæol. Journal*, vol. xii.

her paramour was hanged over the spot where her remains were burnt.^a At a still later period we find the well-known Capitularies of Charlemagne denouncing the practice of burning, and the old heathen sepulture in general.^b Mr. Kemble's researches were carried on in Lüneburg and Verden,—“in the country which was, *par excellence*, inhabited by continental Saxons,”—those very people whose obstinate adherence to the funeral rites of their ancestors Charlemagne found even the penalty of death insufficient to repress. Now, what does Mr. Kemble tell us of this part of Germany? “In Lüneburg and Verden, cremation was universal and exclusive, and, although I believe that Count Münster, Baron von Estorff, and myself, must have opened at least three thousand interments, I can only call to mind two of skeletons, recorded by Estorff. Münster and myself never saw a trace of anything of the kind; nor could I, by the most diligent inquiries, prosecuted for seven months over a great expanse of country, learn that anything similar had been found. Count Münster never hints even having met with unburnt bodies, although his earnest and most accurate researches extend over a period of twenty-five years!”^c Here an important historical document comes opportunely to elucidate the funeral usages of northern Germany. By a deed of contract, bearing date 1249, between the newly-converted Prussians, and the Knights of the Teutonic Order, the former promise, “*quod ipsi et heredes eorum in mortuis comburendis, vel subterrandis, cum equis, sive hominibus, vel cum armis, seu vestibus, vel quibuscunque aliis preciosis rebus, vel etiam in aliis quibuscunque, ritus gentilium de cetero non servabunt, sed mortuos suos juxta morem Christianorum in cimiteriis sepelient et non extra.*”^d Here again we have mention of the practices of both cremation and inhumation at the same period among a Teutonic heathen people, and distinct allusion made to the slaughter of slaves and horses at such occasions. This too, be it remembered, was in the middle of the thirteenth century.

The same want of direct historical evidence that we have to regret concerning the rites of the Southern Germans, the Burgundians, and the Lombards, exists

^a Cogunt eam propria manu per laqueum suspensam vitam finire, et super bustum illius incensæ et concremata corruptorem ejus suspendunt. Boniface, epist. lxxii.

^b Cap. vii. Si quis corpus defuncti hominis secundum ritum paganorum flammâ consumi fecerit, et ossa ejus ad cinerem redierit capite punietur.

Cap. xxii. Jubemus ut corpora Christianorum Saxanorum ad cœmeteria ecclesiæ deferantur, et non ad tumulos paganorum.

^c Burial and Cremation.

^d Dreger's Cod. Diplom. Pomeraniæ, No. 191, p. 286—294.

also in the case of those of the Franks. Gregory of Tours, and the other early Frank annalists, must have been accurately acquainted with these matters, yet we gain no information whatever from their writings. To be sure they were Christian clergy, to whom the heathen and their polluted rites would be devilish abominations.^a It cannot therefore be supposed they would be likely to record the particulars of a nuisance they would fain have had men to forget. Distance as yet had lent no romance to the funeral pile. Yet one little mortuary memento of Frank cremation exists in the fragments of Hunibald.^b “*Saliegastus moritur, et combustus urnæ imponitur*”—and, if this may be trusted, it will suffice for our purpose. French archæologists of the modern school, among whom our own zealous associate the Abbé Cochet stands pre-eminent, have of late years devoted their attention to the sepulchral remains of their own land. Yet Frankish ossuaries must indeed be rare in France, as I suspect to be the case, or else they have been confounded by discoverers with those of Gauls, or Gallo-Romans—which, judging from other facts, is far from improbable—for I know but few examples of their occurrence.

In the Butte de Gargans, a large Merovingian cemetery at Houdan, near Rambouillet, M. Moutié found two interments containing vessels with burnt bones, and heaps of ashes, denoting the burning of the body either in or over the graves.^c A third example occurred at Envermeu. It is the only instance of cremation M. Cochet has found there among the many hundred interments he has so carefully examined. These bones were contained in a vessel of reddish Merovingian pottery.^d We may therefore expect still more satisfactory results from continued research. I should, however, be more disposed to expect Frankish cremation-interments to be found in Belgium and along the Rhine, as being the seats of the Franks before they conquered Gaul. By the time they were fairly established there, they also must have undergone the same change of opinion with regard to funeral rites which we have noticed as having taken place in Southern Germany, and thus earth-burial would probably have mainly superseded cremation, even among that portion of the nation which still adhered to heathenism. On this point it must be observed that when, in the middle of the seventh century, we find St. Wandrille and his disciples of Fontenelle setting forth to evangelise the wild valleys of Neustria; when we find St. Romain attacking the temples of Jupiter, Mercury, Apollo, and Venus, in the very city of

^a Einhard. Vit. Car. M. c. vii. cultui dæmonum dediti, religioni contrarii.

^b In Trithemii Oper. Fran. 1601.

^c La Normandie Souterraine, p. 320.

^d Ib.

Rouen,^a we may rest assured of the fallacy of assuming the existence of a Christian faith from the mere extinction of cremation. Thus Iceland was not christianised till about the year 1000; yet mention of earth-burial occurs there long prior to this date. The transition had commenced. In Egil's Saga, mention is made of a tumulus opened to receive a corpse. Egil himself died a heathen, about 980, and was buried with arms and dress. His remains were found in after times. So Thorolf was buried, with arms and dress, in 926; and Skjalgrím in 934, with his steed and arms, in his ship.

It is clear enough that urn-burial is purely a rite of heathenism. But I cannot understand by what reasoning we are justified in assuming the converse—that all instances of inhumation during the long transition-period are positive indicia of Christianity.

The ancient Salic laws were originally framed long before Clovis and his subjects had decided on the policy of embracing Christianity, and sundry passages accordingly are redolent of heathenism. One of these bears on our present subject, and certainly sanctions a belief in the general cremation custom of the day. It will be found under the head *De Chreodiba*, tit. lxxiv., in the Herold edition of the old German laws, and is directed against those who, having committed homicide in the forests or elsewhere, may attempt concealment by destroying the corpse in the flames.^b

Grimm, who in his researches on this subject has displayed the treasures of his vast philological knowledge, attaches considerable importance to the *thurnichallis* of the old Salic laws, or rather of their ancient gloss. This *thurnichallis*, or *thornechales*, seems to have been the thorn-bushes planted on or around the tumuli, as was probably always the custom of Germanic heathenism, thorn-trees being considered sacred to the sepulchres of the dead, and held in peculiar veneration. Grimm instances a remarkable example of the duration of this traditionary feeling at Schonen, in Sweden. Here the tumuli of the cremation period are easily distinguishable, by the very ancient thorns still growing upon them, and which the peasantry regard as sacred, and refuse to cut down. This bit of comparative evidence is further strengthened by the fact, that these Swedish tumuli bear indiscriminately the very significant names of Balhögen—hills of burning, and Tornhögen—thorn-hills; which stand in remarkable relation with this *thornechales* of the old Franks. Altogether Dr. Grimm, after a close investigation,

^a La Normandie Souterraine, p. 409.

^b Si quis hominem ingenuum, seu in sylva seu in quolibet loco, occiderit, et ad celandum igne combusserit, &c. Si quis antrusionem, vel feminam taliter interfecerit, aut celaverit, aut igne cremaverit, &c.

comes to the conclusion that "the Franks, like the rest of the Germans, burned their dead on faggots of thorns, and then planted thorn-trees over the grave."^a

The pages of Saxo Grammaticus and the Sagas declare the constant practice of cremation in Scandinavia, down to a very late period. In the *Heimskringla* (Preface to the Sagas of the Kings), the respective periods of *Bruna-öld*—or age of burning, and *Haugs-öld*—or age of burial, are clearly defined; and the former, we are told, endured in Norway and Sweden much later than in Denmark. Not only, too, were the last rites paid by fire, but the bodies of warriors of renown were burned in their ships;^b and sometimes the body and the vessel were committed to the winds and waves. Thus we read in *Beowulf*, the body of Scyld was placed in his galley, and left to drift over the deep. "Upon his bosom lay a multitude of treasures, which were to depart afar with him into the possession of the flood. . . . Moreover, they set up for him a golden ensign high over head; they let the deep sea bed him; they gave him to the ocean."

A curious fragment of Nicolaus Damascenus^c renders us aware of the analagous customs of a tribe, apparently of Pontus, at a very early period. Nor did the Scandinavians confine these rites to their own land. As late as the year 879, we find the Norman pirates, foiled in a marauding attack on the Franks, remaining to *burn* their dead before retiring to their ships.^d

It is most important to bear in mind the vicinity and close intercourse of the Scandinavians with the people to whom the origin of our nation is to be ascribed. Hence, perhaps, the close resemblance in their funeral rites. Scandinavian prose and Anglo-Saxon verse alike tell us of the funeral pyre and sepulchral tumulus; or of the ashes of heroes committed in their ships to the elements, figuring the passage over the dark ocean that encircles a northern Hades.^e It appears then to me a matter of surprise, not that we find occasional instances of Saxon cremation, but that we find so few.

The narrative of Wolfstan, inserted in the *Orosius* of King Alfred, is a detailed account of the funeral rites of the Esthonians. Here, again, we have the burning of the dead with arms and dress.

^a Verbrennen der Leichen, p. 36.

^b In *Ynglingasaga*, cap. xxvii.; also Saxo.

^c Fragment, 117. *Κιοι τοὺς ἀποθανόντας κατακαύσαντες, καὶ ὁστολογήσαντες, ἐν ὄλμῳ τὰ ὀσῆα καταπτίσσουσιν, εἶτα ἐνθίντες εἰς πλοῖον, καὶ κόσκινον λαβόντες ἀναπλέουσιν εἰς πέλαγος, καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἀνεμὸν ἐξοδιάζουσιν, ἄχρις ἂν πάντα ἐκφυσηθῇ καὶ ἀφανῇ γένηται.*

^d Nordmanni cadavera suorum flammis esurentes noctu diffugiunt, et ad classem dirigunt gressum.—*Chronicle of Regino*, in *Pertz's Monumenta*, vol. i. p. 591.

^e *Deutsche Myth.* p. 790.

Another writer, some centuries later, gives a similar account, showing that in 1207 the Esthonians were still in a state of heathenism, and maintained the old rites.^a He further mentions^b a very remarkable incident, which is alone sufficient to show how inveterate was the attachment of this people to their old customs. After a brief nominal conversion to Christianity, they relapsed in 1225. Whereon they took back the wives they had been obliged to give up, exhumed their dead who had been interred in christian cemeteries, and proceeded to burn them, "more paganorum pristino." Thus, also, the neighbouring people of Courland burned their dead at the same period.^c

So, too, the Lithuanians^d and Livonians^e burnt their dead. Of the former people, Guagnini, who long lived in the country, tells us that the ancient *parentalia*, when mead and ale were served at the tumuli of relatives, were still observed by the peasantry of some districts. This was about the commencement of the seventeenth century, and corresponds very closely with the rites practised at the festival of Radounitsa, still said to be annually celebrated in some parts of Russia.

St. Boniface relates how the Wendish women were wont to kill themselves on their husband's decease, and so share the funeral pile.^f Thiesmar, of Merseberg, gives a similar account of the Poles, the only variation being that the death of the women was compulsory. In Bohemia numerous ossuaries in the tumuli examined by archæological research, certify the prevalence of cremation among this Slavonic people.^g

Various writers state the heathen Russians to have burned their dead up to a late period, and this renders the account given by Herodotus of earth-burial

^a Sed Estones propter tantam suorum cladem ad persequendum Letthos venire non præsumebant; sed tristia funera, a Letthis sibi invecta, multis diebus colligentes, et igne cremantes essequias cum lamentationibus, et potationibus, multis, more suo celebrabant.—Gruber, *Origines Livoniæ*, p. 58.

^b Et receperunt uxores suas tempore Christianitatis suæ demissas, et corpora mortuorum suorum in cæmeteriis sepulta de sepulchris effoderunt et more paganorum pristino cremaverunt.—Id. p. 155.

^c Mortuos suos cremantes fecerunt planctum suum super eos.—Id. p. 68.

^d Corpora mortuorum cum pretiosissima supellectile, qua vivi maxime utebantur, cum equis, armis, et duobus veneratoriis canibus, falconeque cremabant.—Guagnini de Orig. Lithuanorum, in Pistorii script. rer. Polon.

^e Glanvil writes of the Livonians in 1350, "Mortuorum cadavera tumulo non tradebant, sed populus, facto rogo maximo, usque ad cineres comburebat."

^f Epist. lxii.

^g Böhmens heidnische Ofenplätze, Gräber, und Alterthümer; by Dr. M. Kalina von Jäthenstein. Prag. 1836. Grundzüge der Böhmisches Alterthumskunde; by J. E. Wocel. Prag. 1845. *Wilhelmi's Sinsheim Society's Reports*, 1848.

among the Scythians the more extraordinary. Ibn Foszlán,^a an Arabian traveller early in the tenth century, has fortunately recorded some customs of the Russian tribes on the Volga which came under his personal observation. These bear so particularly on our subject, and, being at so late a period, are so interesting, that I may perhaps be excused if I venture on a few details. Ibn Foszlán tells us the dead were laid in a roofed-over grave during some ten days, while the funeral preparations were made. In the case of the poorer class, the dead, at the expiration of this period, were placed in small canoes, and burned. But if the deceased were a man of rank, one of his slaves, generally a woman, seems to have been induced to offer herself as a companion in death. When all was ready, the vessel of the deceased was drawn ashore, and a tent set up on the deck above a couch, spread with rich stuffs and carpets, on which the body of the deceased was laid, clad in costly dress, and propped up by cushions. By it were placed the arms, and every variety of meats and drinks. A dog was then slaughtered and thrown into the vessel, also two horses, two oxen, and two hens.

The girl, after sacrificing another hen, was now plied with intoxicating drinks, and conducted to the tent, while a great noise was set up by beating on shields, to drown the cries of the victim; "lest," says the writer, "other girls should take alarm, and become less inclined to die with their masters." On entering the tent, the poor wretch was seized by an old hag, attendant on these rites, and called the "death-angel." The rest of the tale is very horrible, and only finds a parallel in the late atrocities in India. Six men now entered. The victim was bound down on the couch by the corpse, and, after a series of violation, was stabbed by the hag, and then strangled by the men. The nearest relatives of the deceased then set fire to the pile of wood built up round the vessel, and, when all was consumed, a tumulus was thrown up above the spot. There is an analogy in these details with those of Indian widow-burning.^b

Leo Diaconus, a Byzantine historian, mentions, A.D. 972, another Slavonic tribe on the Danube, which, after a skirmish, burned their dead, and sacrificed their prisoners, together with sheep and hens. The sacrifice of fowls at heathen graves seems not to have been unusual. Traces of the custom have been met with at Selzen^c on the Rhine and in our own country.^d

^a Published in a German translation by Frähn, at St. Petersburg, in 1823.

^b "The Brahmins, together with an old hag that held her under the arm, thrust her on, and made her sit down upon the wood; and, lest she should run away, they tied her legs and hands, and so they burned her alive."—Brennier.

^c Lindenschmit's *Todtenlager*, bei Selzen.

^d *Collectanea Antiqua*, vol. ii. p. 219.

Much more evidence, and more widely comprehensive, might easily be adduced on the subject of cremation. This brief retrospect however may perhaps suffice for our present purpose. Among the nations of the Indo-European race we have seen, either from direct historical testimony, or from the reflected evidence of comparison, that the Heruli, Franks, Thuringians, Old Saxons, and other German nations, as also the Scandinavians and the Selaves, were all in the constant habit of burning their dead. Many feelings doubtless would combine to keep alive this preference for the pyre among a heathen people. I cannot indeed but think we may discern the existence of the old oriental traditions in the fact that the religious system of Odin, and the ordinances of his successors, enjoined the rite of cremation as a passport to the joys of a Scandinavian paradise, and a mark of honour to the dead. Then would come the horror of the grave—the shuddering repugnance

“To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot,”

which a hopeless heathen would not unnaturally entertain. Once reduced to ashes, and committed to the sepulchral urn, the body is no longer subject to corruption, or the scorn of foemen. We know, indeed, that the Lombards were wont to exhibit the skulls of the vanquished as drinking-cups at their carousals; and, as other tribes equalled them in savage ferocity, the custom was probably not peculiar to them alone. But be all this as it may, we can have no stronger evidence of the tenacity with which the old rite was maintained than the fact, that Charlemagne’s penal severity could not obliterate it among the Saxons; nor Christian teaching among the Esthonian renegades. We have just seen that these latter, on their relapse to heathenism, disinterred their dead—deceased in Christian communion—and bestowed on them the last baptism of fire. There is something very striking in all this, and we are led to suspect a deeper principle was involved than one of mere hereditary habit. Is it then possible to conceive that those particular branches of the Teuton family that united to form our Anglo-Saxon race should have been the sole exceptions to the general rule? Or that if they adhered to the rule in their own original homes, as we know they did adhere, they would at once abjure it on the short voyage across the strip of blue water that separated them from the land of their adoption?

“Cœlum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.”

“And though”—says Sir Thomas Browne, who had a shrewd suspicion of the truth—“and though we are bare in historical particulars of such obsequies in this island, or that the Saxons, Jutes, and Angles burnt their dead, yet came they from parts where ’twas of ancient practice; the Germans using it, from whom

they were descended. And even in Jutland and Sleswick, in Anglia Cimbrica, urns with bones were found not many years before us.”^a

Let us turn then to our own land, and ascertain, if possible, what evidence our early Saxon tombs can furnish of belonging to the general cremation period. In these brief notes it will not be possible to do more than notice such proofs as seem the most leading and positive—that is to say, discoveries of burnt human bones in urns of decidedly Saxon type, and pottery sometimes associated with objects of direct Saxon origin.

We will commence our examination with the Saxon cemetery found during the repairs of the turnpike road at Cestersover, in Warwickshire, a few years ago. Here a great number of skeletons were found with the usual indicia of Saxon arms, fibulæ, &c., and an urn. “This,” Mr. Roach Smith tells us, “was well burnt, had been turned by a lathe, was much ornamented, and contained a mass of ashes. Close to the urn lay an iron sword, and on the mouth of the urn lay a spear-head of iron, distinguished from the rest by having a narrow rim of brass round the socket.”^b The most sceptical will probably, therefore, accept this instance of cremation as Saxon. The rare circumstance of finding the arms by the urn is of peculiar value, for the Saxon dead are most certainly found, as a rule, interred with their arms; and, since arms are so rarely found with examples of urn-burial, some have been led to doubt the Saxon character of such remains. There is, however, little reason to doubt the fact of the deposition of the arms of the dead on the funeral pile, the fervent heat of which would soon reduce them to an undistinguishable mass, probably interred with the embers on the spot. Not to refer again to ancient writers, we can cite the authority of a comparatively recent author on this occasion. The Livonian *Reimchronik* quotes such a circumstance after a battle gained by the Livonians about the middle of the thirteenth century, towards the close of which this chronicle was written.

in disen dingen wurden brächt
ir liute, die dâ lāgen tōt.
sân ir wīsten in gebôt,
daz sie die tōten branten
Und von hinnen santen
mit ir wāpen ungespart;
sie solden dort ouch hervart
und reise rīten.
des geloubtens bī den zīten;

^a Hydriotaphia, chap. ii.

^b Collectanea Antiqua, vol. i. p. 41. Pagan Saxondom, p. 35.

der rede volgeten sie mite,
wan ez was der liute site.
ûf hôher, zehant sie trâten
ir tôten, die sie hâten,
die brantens mit ir ziuge
(vür wâr ich nicht enliuge):
Spere, schilde, brünje, pfert,
Helme, keyen, und swert,
Branteman durch ir willen,
Dâ mit solden sie stillen
Den tiuvel in jener werlde dort.^a
Sôgrôz tôrheit wart nei gehôrt.

Lines 3,868—3,888.

This is tolerable authority that it was the heathen custom to burn arms, &c., with the dead down to a late period, and the authority is the more valuable because it is merely a detail of a common occurrence of the day. We gather too from these words that such an act was not merely performed in honour of the dead, but that it involved an observance connected with their system of deprecatory religious worship.

Great numbers of ossuaries—in fact entire cremation cemeteries unmixed with interments—have been found at Newark, Nottinghamshire; and at Kingston, near Derby.^b A considerable resemblance will be observed between the urns from these two places and the one found at Cestersover, both in form, ornament, and material. All contained calcined human bones. In one of the Kingston urns the remains of a bronze fibula and some glass beads were found; and bronze tweezers, iron shears, and part of a bone comb in one of those at Newark. We know not however how much of the reliques were lost; for of these urns numbers were broken in digging, and at Kingston alone not fewer than two hundred are calculated to have been thrown away by the workmen, before any attempt was made to preserve them—and yet this was close to so important a town as Derby! Under such disadvantages does archæology labour.

A Saxon cemetery at Holme Pierrepont, in Nottinghamshire,^c furnished, among other reliques, an urn which closely corresponds with one of the three, containing human calcined bones, found in another cemetery at Marston Hill,^d

^a Livländische Reimchronik, herausgeben von F. Pfeiffer. Stuttgart, 1844.

^b Collectanea Ant. vol. ii. p. 228. Journal of Arch. Association, vol. iii.

^c Journal of Arch. Assoc. vol. iii. Collect. Ant. vol. ii.

^d Archæologia, vol. XXXIII.

Northamptonshire, carefully examined by Sir H. Dryden. Before proceeding further south however, we must not fail to notice the very satisfactory instances of Saxon cremation recorded as having been found in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Of these several are said to have been discovered on the occasion of the first opening of the celebrated Driffeld tumulus, afterwards examined by Dr. Thurnam. Portions of these sepulchral urns are preserved in the York Museum, and present, as I may state on Dr. Thurnam's authority, "the bosses and incused patterns of the veritable Anglo-Saxon type."

In 1802 several urns, also Saxon, were found at Broughton, near Malton, in Yorkshire, and are now preserved in the York Museum. These urns all contained calcined human remains, and Dr. Thurnam is inclined to think many more would be found in the same spot on a further examination.

In Lincolnshire again "a number of cinerary earthen vases" were very recently found at South Willingham. Drawings of three of these urns were sent by the Rev. E. Trollope to the Archæological Institute, and they are described in the Journal of that Society as Saxon, and resembling "in their forms and character those figured in Mr. Neville's Saxon Obsequies." These urns were somewhat exceptionally formed of a yellow, and a dark-grey, clay.

At the Saxon cemetery of Fairford, Gloucestershire, several instances of cremation came under my own immediate observation, and I have reason to think others have occurred there. In the adjoining county of Oxfordshire, at Brompton, another discovery of Saxon remains has quite recently been made by Mr. Akerman.^b Here inhumation, as at Fairford, was the usual mode of sepulture, but still, in the small piece of ground opened, not less than three examples of cremation occurred. In one urn, besides burnt human bones, was the so frequent comb, and the fused remains of some object in lead. This vessel is of the usual black Saxon pottery, formed of a rather coarse ill-prepared earth, coloured with graphite or plumbago, and strongly resembles the one from Eye, in Suffolk, figured in "*Pagan Saxondom*," Pl. xxii., and which contained a comb, with a knife, a pair of shears, and iron tweezers. Mr. Kemble was so struck with the analogy this Suffolk urn bears to those of North Germany, that, in consequence, he wrote his valuable paper "*On Mortuary Urns found at Stade-on-the-Elbe*," which enriches our *Archæologia*.^c Other cases of cremation have also been noticed in the very large Saxon cemetery at Stowe Heath, in the same county of

^a Archæological Inst. Journal, vol. xiv.

^b Archæologia, vol. XXXVII.

^c Vol. XXXVI. p. 270.

Suffolk, among numerous inhumations with arms, ornaments, &c. The ground at Stowe Heath is a very complete example of a long existing cemetery;^a for we find in it the gradual changes of funeral rites from cremation to that of burial in the simple earth, and then again to stone coffins at a later period. The urns at Walsingham in Norfolk called forth Sir T. Browne's beautiful essay "Hydriotaphia" in the seventeenth century. We owe Mr. Neville's "Saxon Obsequies" to the cemetery of Wilbraham in Cambridgeshire. Here cremation had been freely practised, as shown by the presence of some 120 mortuary urns against 188 cases of earth-burial. These urns present great variety of form and ornamentation, and the most striking analogy exists between them and the mortuary vessels from other counties of England, as those also found at Stade-on-the-Elbe in Hanover. Other examples of Saxon cremation have been discovered at Sandy in Bedfordshire. The account furnished to us, and recorded in our "Proceedings," is unfortunately too brief and indefinite, but one of the urns there engraved^b is of an unmistakeably Saxon character. In the Isle of Wight also Mr. Hillier's researches at Brightstone and Bowcombe Down revealed examples of early Saxon cremation. One of the urns given in the coloured engraving harmonises with the usual black Saxon type; the other closely resembles some of the urns found in Hanover.

Thus we have before us examples of Saxon cremation in thirteen English counties. More could probably be adduced, but I have only taken such as immediately presented themselves. These, for the most part, are the results of accidental discovery, and valuable rather from widely-diffused resemblance than generally from individual copiousness. All these urns will be found totally distinct from Roman or Romano-British manufacture, on the one hand, as from Keltic on the other. A general resemblance will be found among them when attentively considered. This remark also holds good on comparison with the North German examples Mr. Kemble has set before us from Stade-on-the-Elbe, and the banks of the Weser,^c which in fact, are the prototypes of many of our English forms.

In the foregoing enumeration, however, Kent, the scene, par excellence, of our very greatest Saxon research, has been omitted—and purposely. Its importance demands a separate notice. True it is, the interesting and instructive *Journal of Brian Faussett* solely records interments of the inhumation period in the Jute

^a Collect. Antiq. vol. ii. p. 165. West Suffolk Inst. Journal.

^b Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London, vol. ii. p. 109.

^c *Archæologia*, vol. XXXVI. plates xxii. xxiii.

cemeteries of Kent. He does not even appear to have met with a single example of urn-burial *in situ*. Those, whoever, who have read the "*Inventorium Sepulchrale*," will not fail to remember that every cemetery which came under his active examination afforded abundant proofs of a prior sepulchral occupation by a people given to cremation.

The sketches given by Faussett of the pottery found so abundantly at Crundale sufficiently demonstrate its Roman character. Nor will any one doubt that the vessels he portrays from Gilton, Kingston, &c., are Saxon. But Faussett constantly alludes to finding a number of fragments of cinerary urns, of some former era, broken by those who dug these later graves. These vessels unfortunately he never seems to have attempted to restore, and consequently we have no sketches to assist us in drawing our conclusions. We learn however that these "bone-urns" were of that common black pottery, with an ornamentation impressed by the finger, which is so distinguishing a characteristic of early Saxon graves. Certainly there is nothing in the description given which can induce a suspicion of a Romano-British, or of a Keltic origin. But in Dr. Mortimer's account of his researches on Chartham Downs—given in the "*Inventorium*," and also in Douglas's "*Nenia*"—I think we may obtain further evidence of the probable early Saxon character of these primary cremation interments. There can be little doubt that the first barrow opened by Dr. Mortimer was an example of a Saxon grave—whether the bones had been burnt, as he supposes, or not, according to Faussett. Yet in this conflicting evidence we have to choose between the official report of the Secretary of the Royal Society, and the memory of a child of ten years old, as Faussett then was. Anyhow, the Saxon character of this range of tumuli on Chartham Downs is indisputable.

In the next tumulus opened, or, to quote Dr. Mortimer, "In the barrow B was found an urn of red earth, three and a half inches wide at the top, six inches in the belly, and three inches and three quarters at the bottom; and in a large black urn there were some burnt bones. In the urns were ashes mixed with chalk. No arms were found here.

"In the barrow C were found two urns of black earth; one of them had a round lid on, flat on one side, and a little rounding on the other. These urns were broken, and their contents spilt.

"In the barrow D, which was much larger than either of the former, there was found only a black urn, and so rotten that it could not be taken up whole."

These three barrows, in an incontestably Saxon group, and manifestly not disturbed since their formation, appear very satisfactory evidence of Saxon burial

by cremation. In barrow B, the urn and its contents were found entire. In C, the urns seem merely to have been crushed by the weight of the super-incumbent earth. A lid is described on one of these urns, as was noticed with those of Newark, and occasionally with the German ones. In barrow D, the black sepulchral urn fell to pieces on being touched—a circumstance of common enough occurrence with the early porous ill-baked Saxon pottery. If, therefore, the urns in these three barrows, described by Dr. Mortimer, be considered Saxon, we are tolerably safe in attributing a like origin to the fragments of the others, which Faussett found so carefully deposited in the ends of the graves he re-opened. They probably belong to the primary cremation period of the first heathen Saxon invaders or settlers—for it is now pretty generally admitted that the Saxons had settlements in England prior to their final descents *en masse*. How long their old rites were maintained in their new homes we have no means of ascertaining. It was long before Christianity became their creed. Yet when they found themselves in contact with a people, for the most part Christian, to whom cremation was altogether abhorrent,—and when, perhaps, with increasing civilization, cremation became inconvenient to themselves,—they, not improbably, came by degrees to adopt the other rite, as we have before seen was the case with the Franks and other Germans. The cause of the change, either in England, or France, or Southern Germany, could hardly have been the lack of fuel, for forests abounded in all these countries. But as soon as a division of property ensued, and population increased, the positive necessity of free access to wood for general cremation purposes would at once be found to clash with the rights of individuals, and the forest privileges of the chieftain; hence private inconvenience and the maxims of Christianity would be found working powerfully together for the abolition of the old rite. The Charters of the Codex Diplomaticus however record these old heathen graves, and subsequent interments, probably Christian, among them^a—just as I suppose the case to have been with the Kentish graves in question.

“The earliest Christians,” says Kemble, “buried, beyond a doubt, where the earliest pagans had deposited the burnt remains of their dead. They still desired to rest among those whom they loved, or from whom they had sprung.”

^a A valuable instance of this occurs in a charter of the year 976. (Cod. Dipl. 595.) “ðonon forð on ða mearce ó Beonotleage gemære : swá on ðone hæðenan byrgels : ðonan west on ða mearce ðær Ælfstán lið on hæðenan byrgels.” Ælfstán clearly was some Saxon of note, and most probably a Christian, whose remains were thus interred after the ancient custom, not in the “*cemetery ecclesiæ*,” but “*ad tumulos paganorum*.”

From Mr. Vallance's account of Saxon remains found at Sittingbourne,^a a portion of that cemetery must have been given up to urn-burial, and belongs, according to Mr. Kemble's judgment,^b to the early Saxon period. But a better ascertained example of Saxon cremation presents itself in a discovery in a barrow at Coombe in Kent, about the year 1848. Here a copper vessel was found containing burnt human bones. By it were two swords, a spear-head in iron, some glass and amber beads, and part of an ornament set with garnets or coloured glass. "The swords appeared to be wrapped in cloth, and a veil of cloth appears to have been laid on the bowl, portions of which are still adhering to the edges."^c So too a cloth was found spread over a bowl in the Alemannic graves at Oberflacht. The handsome hilt of one of these swords has been engraved in both the works, "*Pagan Saxondom*,"^d and "*Collectanea Antiqua*."^e It may appear somewhat abnormal in Saxon graves to find metal vessels converted into cinerary urns. Perhaps it was in accordance with the wishes of the deceased; and certainly two parallel cases may be cited in Bavaria, at Türkheim and Etringen, in the neighbourhood of Augsburg.^f It cannot therefore be truly said that Kent presents no examples in support of the theory of Saxon cremation. We have however very much yet to learn on this subject, not only in Kent, but generally throughout England, and it is to be hoped it may meet with the careful consideration its importance deserves. Cremation is but very rarely accompanied by arms or ornaments; and old crocks with burnt bones have so little to interest the peasant who usually makes the discovery that few examples are rescued from oblivion. The Abbé Cochet even tells us that in some parts of Normandy a notion of ill-luck is associated with the finding of these mortuary urns, and that the peasantry have been known to break them up, believing them the work of sorcery.^g Kemble too alludes to the remains of some such feeling in Hanover. On the other hand, again, inexperience has doubtless often attributed examples of Saxon cremation to the Keltic or Romano-British periods.

If however no positive examples of the practice of this rite had been met with in England, or if no more should ever again occur, I firmly believe an attentive

^a *Collectanea Antiq.* i. p. 98.

^b Kemble's *Burial and Cremation*, in *Archæological Journal*, vol. xii.

^c *Proceedings of the Bury and West Suffolk Archæological Institute*, vol. i. p. 27.

^d Plate xxiv. p. 47.

^e Vol. ii. p. 164.

^f *Wilhelmi's Sinsheim Reports*, 1846.

^g *La Normandie Souterraine*, p. 142.

examination of our own local nomenclature,^a especially considered in connection with the universal usage of the old German father-land, would suffice to establish a right belief on this point.

If these views on the early cremation practice of Saxons in this country had merely been my own, I should not have presumed to speak so unhesitatingly. But I have only attempted to carry out the early opinions of Douglas,^b since so well developed in the works of Mr. Roach Smith^c and Mr. Akerman,^d to whose labours we owe much of our present information on Saxon archæology. Most present will be already aware of the interest taken also by our friend the late Mr. Kemble in this subject. It is indeed peculiarly his own, and I cannot conclude these imperfect notes more fitly than in his own words. "If," he says, "we continue our comparison, and examine the articles found with these urns, we shall find an equally striking agreement between the German and the English interments.

"If we are inclined in England to attribute them to the Anglo-Saxons, much

^a "The names to which I now have to refer you are these :—

1st. Those compounded with A'd, *the funeral pile, strues rogi*, the actual burning-place of the dead :

A'deshám, now Adisham, in Kent. Cod. Dip. 983.

Ædes wyrd, in Worcestershire. Ib. 1,062.

2nd. Those compounded with Bæl, which is nearly equivalent in meaning to A'd :

Bæles beorgh, in Gloucestershire. Cod. Dip. 90.

Bæle. Cod. Dip. 765.

3rd. Those compounded with Bryne, the *combustion, burning*; or brand, which is nearly equivalent to it :

Brandes beorgh. Cod. Dip. 1,335.

Brynes cumb. Ib. 457.

Brynes hám. Ib. 675.

Brynes hyl. Ib. 1,094.

Brynes sól. Ib. 1149.

Brynes stede. Ib. 204.

Brynenja tún. Ib. 1152.

4th. Those compounded with Fin, which, like A'd, denotes *the pile itself, strues rogi* :

Finbeorgh. Cod. Dip. 468.

Finestún. Ib. 520."

From Kemble's "Notices of Heathen Interments in the Codex Diplomaticus" in Arch. Journal, vol. xiv. p. 135.

See also on this subject of nomenclature, Grimm, "Über das Verbrennen der Leichen," p. 41.

^b Nenia Britannica.

^c Collectanea Antiqua, vols. i. ii.

^d Archæological Index. Pagan Saxondom.

more must we attribute them in Germany to the race from which the Anglo-Saxons came. Roman they cannot be in Germany, for they are found where Romans never came. Slavonic they probably are not, for they are found in countries where the Slaves never had lasting settlements, and bear no resemblance whatever to what is commonly found in lands where the Slaves were settled from the commencement of our historical period. Keltic they are not, for there is no record of Kelts in North Germany at all; and what little we do know of Keltic art has nothing in common with these forms. But if they are none of these they are German; and if they are German, so are the similar ones in England: in other words we have here a second group, namely, that of 'The Burnt Germans of the Age of Iron.' And two classes of interments are shown to belong to the Anglo-Saxons; one in which cremation was, one in which it was not practised."

^a Kemble, Burial and Cremation.